Rome June 30th 1824

My dear Father

I hasten to tell you, as I said, when the Gold Medal was given me - of my present success, which will gratify you more than the former - I have received an order to paint an Historical Picture - quite according to my own will — this high favor is shown by Mr Jenkins - who had seen a little drawing of mine done in black lead pencil, in a Ladys Book and he admired it too much - that Yesterday he came and requested me to paint him a picture from it - he said that he saw so much genius in it - and it gratified him so entirely that he would not stint me down to price or size or number of figures - he would leave it entirely to my judg - with the confidence that as I had imagined so beautiful a scene - I should execute it every way to his satisfaction" - There now - my dear Father is not this a reward for all my toiling? will you despair any more? - nothing could have been done to gratify my pride for it comes out of the very course I have been pursuing - it is the very point I have been aiming at with an anxious and ever aching heart - when my poor Father has watched me with a sad and doubtful heart in disappointing with music - but Sheer

of I shall be successful —

The subject is King Lear sleeping — Cordelia is watching by his couch — and Kent stands behind — I have just completed a picture from the Tempest of Ferdinand & Miranda playing at Chess, which has got me great praise — and perhaps even this commendation from Mr Lockie I could not had he not seen the Lear he should have — but this — another reason to make me happy, is that this Gentleman is a man of the finest taste and knowledge in the Arts — and this is the only order he has given in Rome — he had previously taken great notice of me and I now find had formed a very high opinion of me — for you must know that the Artists are beat down in prices and made to alter their works to the wills of their employers — but how different is this with me — one thing I must tell you my dear Father — that my reading & Music do away from my painting have assisted me a much and may yet assist me very much — How proud would you be of me if you could just know how much greater are my acquirements than many of my brother Artists —

But this good News is not all I have come nide

which will please you as much as the other—
You will remember by intention to make a study
of Raffaelle's School of Athens the size of the original
(28 feet long 20 high) for the Royal Academy—a study
I was deferring this grand work on account of the expense
of it—which will be very great—and a kind friend (whom
I knew soon after poor Keats death) come to Rome from
Naples—you will recollect Mr Severn who was so kind
in keeping me at his house with his family when I was ill
—he asked me "why I did you on with this copy?" was it the
"expence I will then I have been a long time intending to do
"this—I will make you a present of 200 £ for this purpose
"mind I wont lend it you—for that will defeat my purpose
"I will give it you—that your mind may be at rest, and
"that you may paint the picture without care or trouble"—
was not this noble? was not this encouraging? I have already
begun the work and may be able to accomplish it without
this kind offer—but it will give me confidence in going on
with it—I intend to make an exhibition of it when I return
to London—it will raise me very quickly in the public
estimation—it will get me a name to return home with
Ah! return home—when will this be—next Summer as I said
in my last letter I shall certainly come to England, if I can
get a "cheap lift"—for it can only be for the Summer—
I must return again to Rome in the Autumn—and all this will cost
nearly 100 £ or more—unless I meet with some kind friend to bring me—I must stay

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I have just removed to the address above which is in a very healthy situation and I have got much longer suite of rooms than at Mrs Starkie's — I have been very fortunate — I would glad you to see what a show of Statutes and Copies I have got — my Walls are all covered from top to bottom — I am thankful to have

[illegible] Rome

[illegible] Rome for Albano — Some 12 miles distant — for the purpose of painting an Italian Vintage, with the Albano costumes — This is a subject that will please very much in England and I think to dispose to sell it — Do you see my dear Father I shall make a fine fortune yet in the World — I am in better health — and stronger — than perhaps I have ever been in my life — it seems like a change in my constitution I am nearly getting Younger again — God bless you and preserve you in health & happiness for my sake — I think he does —

Your faithful Son — Joseph